

REMARKS

Claims 43-78 and 89-91 are rejected. Claims 1-42, 65-72, 79-88 and 92 are withdrawn from consideration and have been cancelled. Independent Claims 43 and 73 have been amended to incorporate the recitations of Claims 64 and 78 respectively. Claims 64 and 78 have been cancelled.

Claims 43-78 and 89-91 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,004,476 to Verma et al. The Examiner believes that Verma et al. encompasses the compositions recited in the claims. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The Examiner in paragraph 8 of the Office Action has indicated that the prior art does not teach the use of 20 to 80 percent alkali hydroxide in the composition. The Examiner believes that since the prior art discloses that the amount of lithium hydroxide can be adjusted to adjust alkalinity, that Verma implicitly teaches the 20 to 80 percent range now recited in the two pending independent claims. Applicants respectfully disagree.

The range recited in the claims is not obvious. There is no teaching or suggestion in the art to use such a level. The only way such a range can be selected on a fair reading of Verma is by hindsight using Applicants' own application. Such is clearly not permitted. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the §103 rejection be withdrawn in view of the amendment and above remarks.

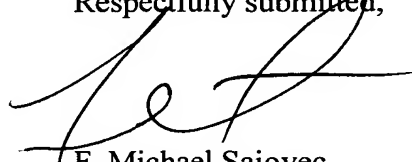
Applicants have amended the Abstract to delete the word "disclosed" and substitute therefore the word "provided."

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CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance and the same is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 919-854-1400 for resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,



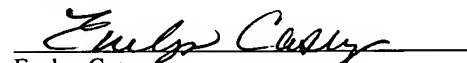
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